

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 CIAE-00 PM-03

INR-05 L-02 ACDA-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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P 041518Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6237

INFO SECDEF PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 15824

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MPOL, NATO

SUBJECT: MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE

REF: (A) STATE 259740 (B) STATE 264715 (C) STATE 265795

1. SUMMARY: WE CONCUR IN ANALYSIS UK POSITION IN REF(A) I.E., THAT UK WILL IN GENERAL SUPPORT U.S. EFFORTS IN DPC TO ADOPT A LONG-RANGE CONCEPT IN SUPPORT OF NATO. BUT UK WILL NOT ACCEPT 3 PERCENT INCREASE CONCEPT AND WILL RESIST ANYTHING SEEN TO BE OVEREMPHASIS ON CONVENTIONAL LEG OF DETERRENCE TRIPOD. MOST SUPPORT WILL BE AT POLITICAL LEVEL WITH OFFICIALS, BOTH MILITARY AND CIVILIAN MORE RELUCTANT TO DEPART FROM TRADITIONAL NATO BUREAUCRATIC APPROACH. UK WILL ACCEPT U.S. PAPER ON MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE AS A BASIS FOR DRAFTING FINAL PAPER. BUT SOME IMPORTANT OFFICIALS ARE CONCERNED BECAUSE U.S. PAPER IS NOT COMPLETE -- WITH SIGNIFICANT ASPECTS STILL UNKNOWN. WE RECOMMEND THAT U.S. BE PREPARED TO FILL IN MISSING PIECES IN PAPER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. END SUMMARY.

2. WE CONCUR IN ANALYSIS OF LIKELY UK POSITION AT DPC
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AS SET OUT IN PARA 3 OF REF (A) WITH MINOR EXCEPTIONS.

WE AGREE THAT AT POLITICAL LEVEL, UK WILL SUPPORT U.S. EFFORTS TO GET NATO TO TAKE A POSITIVE LOOK AT A LONG-RANGE CONCEPT FOR PLANNING. UK IS ALREADY COMMITTED TO THIS BY MASON-SCHLESINGER LETTER. SENIOR OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD US THAT UK WILL SUPPORT U.S. APPROACH IN GENERAL AND THAT THEY SEE U.S. PROPOSED GUIDANCE PAPER AS AN EXCELLENT BASIS FOR ACTUAL DRAFTING AT DPC ONCE U.S. SUPPLIES PORTIONS WHICH STILL ARE MISSING.

3. SUPPORT FOR U.S. POSITION EXISTS PRIMARILY AT POLITICAL LEVEL BECAUSE OFFICIAL LEVEL PERSONNEL, PARTICULARLY IN MOD AND FCO NATO OFFICES, ARE CONCERNED LEST MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE UNDERCUT WORK BEING DONE "MORE BUREAUCRATICALLY" BY A VARIETY OF GROUPS AND COMMITTEES IN BRUSSELS. THIS GROUP INCLUDES PEOPLE WHO HAVE DEVOTED MUCH TIME AND ENERGY TO THE TRADITIONAL TYPE OF NATO PLANNING. THEY ARE SKILLED IN THIS ACTIVITY AND PROBABLY FEEL THAT IT HAS SERVED UK INTERESTS. NEW U.S. APPROACH IS SEEN AS A THREAT BY THESE OFFICIALS.

4. ON SPECIFIC ISSUES, WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALS MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) THE 3 PERCENT INCREASE IN REAL RESOURCES IS A NON-STARTER FOR UK IN LIGHT UK DEFENSE REVIEW DECISIONS.

B) USING TRIPOD AS "CONVENTIONAL LEG" HAS BEEN

TOO SHORT UP TO PRESENT BUT IT SHOULD NOT BE MADE TOO LONG. EACH LEG SHOULD BE EQUAL.

C) LOGISTICS STOCKS SHOULD BE INCREASED SO THAT ALLIANCE CAN ACHIEVE THE MOST COMBAT CAPABILITY AS EARLY AS

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POSSIBLE.

5. RE REF (C) WE DO NOT THINK THAT UK BELIEVES THAT STALWART CONVENTIONAL CAPABILITY IS NOT POSSIBLE. UK OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS HAVE ASURED US THAT THEY ACCEPT THE CONCEPT. THEIR CONCERN IS THAT BY IDENTIFYING CONVENTIONAL CAPABILITY AS THE "MAIN" ELEMENT OF THE CONVENTIONAL-TACTICAL NUCLEAR-STRATEGIC TRIAD, THE U.S. IS PRECISELY BRINGING THE DETERRENT INTO QUESTION. WE HOPE CLARIFICATION THIS POINT WILL MEAN IT WILL BE EASY TO REACH AGREEMENT PER REF (C) BUT WE STILL SEE THE DISCUSSION OF RELATIVE VALUE OF ELEMENTS OF TRIAD AS MOST IMPORTANT ITEM IN DPC CONSIDERATION OF MINISTERIAL GUIDANCE.

6. WE PASSED AIDE MEMOIRE AND MADE OTHER POINTS IN REF (B) TO MORAY STEWART MORNING DECEMBER 3. HE SAID THAT DEFENSE SECRETARY MASON'S BRIEFING PAPERS FOR DPC WERE FINISHED BUT HE PROMISED TO BRING AIDE MEMOIRE TO MASON'S ATTENTION BEFORE MEETING. WE BELIEVE THAT SECRETARY CONFIDENTIAL

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MASON WILL GENERALLY SUPPORT U.S. POSITION BUT WE ALSO ANTICIPATE THAT HE WILL NOT TAKE THE LEAD IN TRYING TO CONVINCE OTHER MINISTERS TO ACCEPT OUR VIEWS.

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